

In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 19, with the following rewritten paragraph:

~~according~~According to the inventor's consideration, the vibration of the vacuum pump is transmitted to the vacuum chamber due to the fact that the flexible pipe is shrunk and loses the flexibility, i.e. the function of suppressing the transmission of the vibration. In view of this, according to the present invention, the flexible pipe is fixed by the mechanism so as not to shrink at the time of evacuation and thereby to prevent the vibration of the vacuum pump from being transmitted to the vacuum chamber. Further, according to the present invention, the vibration is successfully prevented from being transmitted to the vacuum chamber without adversely affecting the exhaust rate, i.e. without reducing the throughput.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 19, with the following rewritten paragraph:

After the vacuum chamber 16 is evacuated to a predetermined vacuum level, the upper chuck plate 120 is moved down to a position where the two substrates 44 are almost in contact with each other. Observing the alignment marks of the substrates 44 by the CCD cameras 26 and 28, the amount of deviation between the two substrates 44 is calculated and the deviation is corrected by the calculated value. The deviation can be corrected by various methods. According to this embodiment, the deviation is

corrected by moving the lower chuck plate 22. Upon complete correction according to the alignment marks of the substrates 44, the upper electrostatic chuck plate 20 is pressed against the lower electrostatic chuck plate 22 under a predetermined pressure thereby to bond the substrates 44 to each other.